

EDUCATION QUALITY IMPROVEMENT IN INDONESIA

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Abstract

Indonesia boasts a substantial population and a wealth of natural resources. But far fewer people understand how rapidly the nation is growing. The country, in 2045, is going to achieve 100 years of its independence. There are a number of achievements that Indonesia will have at that time, such as productive ages attaining around 60% or exceeding from the total number of population 373.590.000 people. By 2030, the country could have the world's 7th-largest economy, overtaking Germany and the United Kingdom. But to meet its ambitious growth targets and attract international investment, the country has to manage this opportunity well through character education, and then affect on the improvement of nation's economic capability. It may be appropriate, due to Indonesia is attempting to improve its education quality by integrating it directly into the global education system.

Keywords: improvement, quality, education, character;

INTRODUCTION

Although the commitment of the government of Indonesia with respect to national education quality improvement based on the target of the Constitution No. 20 is relatively very slow, it is then further followed with the attempt of establishing and applying Curriculum 2013. The curriculum does not only emphasize on the improvement of good character but also on the cognitive, psychomotoric and affective aspects (Upu, 2010). Furthermore, curriculum 2013 also gives priority on good character development, without forgetting the other important aspects, as been stated above.

National education system is regulated and implemented on the basis of Constitution No. 20 year 2003. The main target of the constitution is on the formation of Indonesian people acting upon global and national needs. Considering the complexity of educational problems, the conduct of education is then further regulated and established building on the Government Regulation No. 19 year 2005 concerning The Board of National Education Standard (BSNP).

The actions that have been taken to support the attainment of the curriculum target are the improvement, implementation and evaluation of graduate competency, content, process and assessment standards. The improvement is included in the Government Regulation No. 32 year 2013 concerning the amendment of the Government Regulation No.19 year 2005.

Coming to the globalization era, the government of Indonesia may not be proud with the number of regulations on occasion of educational world. It is now the time and it may not be postponed again to immediately adapt with the advancement of global education by taking action to create prominent human resources (Runtuwene, 2007). It has been so long, teaching and learning process and education system in Indonesia is "forced" to follow and implement ineffective education system (Upu, 2010; Jalal, 2008; <http://fitwiethayalisi.wordpress.com/teknologi-pendidikan/permasalahanpendidikan-masa-kini/>; Wahab, 2007). These are because: (1) curriculum, for a teacher, is textbook. The number of textbooks is also inadequate, moreover in the schools at rural areas. Almost there are no attempts from teachers, in general (Upu, 2012b; www.sahabatyatim.org/artikel/7-penyebab-kualitas-pendidikan-di-indonesia-rendah/), to use other relevant learning sources, additionally to

make learning sources themselves; (2) teacher-centered. In general, learning in classroom is still teacher-centered with speech method (Upu, 2012a; Sutriani, 2012). The method is not prohibited to be applied in learning. Nevertheless, too much talk will make students boring and ruin their creativity. This means teachers do not help pupils construct their own knowledge through assimilation and accomodation processes and/or through their learning environment; (3) teachers lack professional knowledge. In spite of lately five years the government of Indonesia assuredly conducts Teacher Profession Education, the results have not been maximal. In general, teachers shuffle up the learning process (<http://fullpaper.blogspot.com/2011/07/makalah-lengkap-sistem-pendidikan.html>; Wahab, 2007). They stay make lesson plan, but it is still as for the sake of supervisors. It is not made to be a guidance in teaching (Upu, 2013a). Even, there is a preference of a number of teachers to never more review their lesson plan for several years. Whereas learning matters move on extremely dynamical; (4) School facilities are inadequate for exploring sciences well. The significant things that a school must possess to strive for the education advancement of developed countries is the completeness of facilities and learning sources. Without them, school as the determinant of education quality improvement will not evolve well. In relation to this instance, there is an imbalance between facilities that schools in urban area have and those existing in rural area do; (5) questions that are not open-ended. In general, teachers make questions with only one alternatively correct answer. As a result, this enables students to cheat from their friend. Teachers, in general (Upu, 2003), have not been able to make questions with several correct answers, so that, opening books when examination takes place should not be prohibited.

PROBLEM STATEMENTS

Regulations concerning education are large enough, but the real actions with respect to them are still in question.

APPLYING CHARACTER EDUCATION IN INDONESIA

One of the crucial things in supporting the achievement of high quality education in Indonesia is character education. Every country is surely applying education which is different from others, according to their citizen characters.

3.1 Character and Elements of Character

What is character? Character relates to personality, nature, behavior, and morals which are various among people. According to Sastroatmodjo (2012), character contains essential elements, for instance, attitude owned by a person which can make him having good or bad behavior. Based on these definitions, character generally refers to moral (Law No. 20, 2013) which is based on the perspective how people interpret it. Conversely, character is not strongly associated to one's physical body, although sometimes they can be connected. It is not absolutely true that a person, with a muscular and strong body, looks like a security man, has a ruthless and bad behavior. On the contrary, it is not always right that a person who has kind appearance possesses a good behavior. Along with the previous opinions, Samani (2012) defines character as characteristics of soul, morals, or magnanimity that differ someone from others.

Cronbach (1997) defines,

Character is not a cumulation of separate habits and ideas. Character is an aspect of the personality. Beliefs, feelings, and actions, are linked; to change character is to recognize the

personality. Tiny lessons on principles of good conduct will not be effective if they cannot be integrated with the person's system of beliefs about himself, about others, and about the good community.

The elements of character are various. Although each element has a different role to another, an element and other substances are supportive of each other to lead someone to act.

There are 49 elements to build character in one-self, namely:

Alertness, attentiveness, availability, benevolence, boldness, cautiousness, compassion, contentment, creativity, decisiveness, deference, dependability, determination, diligence, discernment, discretion, endurance, enthusiasm, faith, flexibility, forgiveness, generosity, gentleness, gratefulness, honor, hospitality, humanity, initiative, joyfulness, justice, loyalty, meekness, obedience, orderliness, patience, persuasiveness, punctuality, resourcefulness, responsibility, security, self-control, sensitivity, sincerity, thoroughness, thriftiness, tolerance, truthfulness, virtue, and wisdom. (www.characterfirst.com/qualities)

Another view about character (Lickona, 2003) is that character comprehends of three important aspects which are associated to each other (moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral behavior). The three aspects contain three basic competences, such as knowing the good, desiring the good, and doing the good (Ryan and Bohlin, 1999). When those three elements as well as the competences are finely integrated, it will create a laudable habit of mind, habit of heart, and habit of action in one-self.

The Lickona's idea is based on Aristoteles' statement, namely "... good character as the life of right conduct. Right conduct in relation to other person and in relation to oneself". The Lickona's idea of character is described in the following figure;

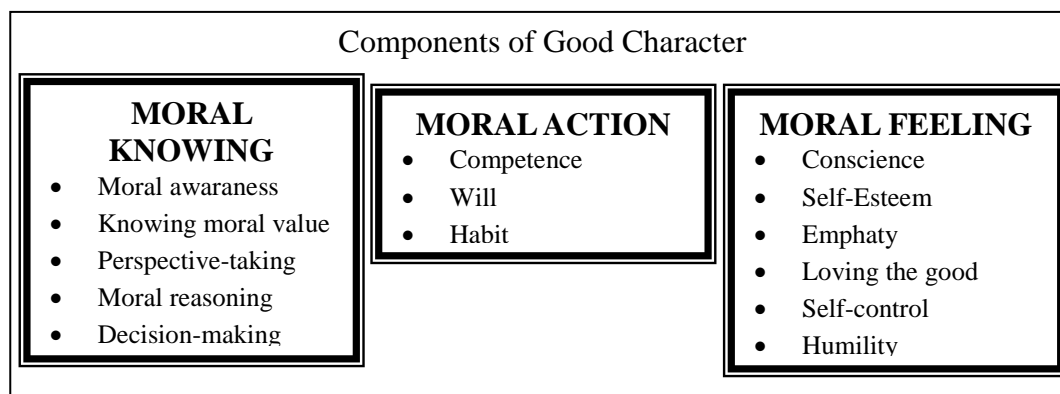


Figure 1. Character components (Lickona, 2003)

3.2 Character Education

Character education is an essential thing in supporting the improvement of education quality (Law No. 20, 2003). Character and its elements are difficult to develop without training it into a better way as a support or act toward education itself (De Vries and Zan). Character education in Indonesia is much based on what is being taught in the religion, especially in Islam. Before teaching about character education, teachers have to have an excellent culture and character beforehand (Tuerah, 2012).

Experts define character education differently. According to Character Education (Chapman, 2011), the application of social-emotional and character development in classrooms is about teaching, practicing, and modeling essential personal and civic life habits skills that are almost

universally understood as making people good human beings. In accordance with Chapman, about character education, it is stated that character education broadly defined can include anything from "values clarification," to citizenship, to moral guidance (www.characterfirst.com). On the other hand, Romanowki (in Chapman) found that many students in high school feel they are being talked down to and treated like little kids. It is not just the students, who are against implementing character education in school. Teachers also feel that adding this program to the curriculum is pointless.

Good characters can support a person, even his family, circumstance, and people in general to do right things. Moreover they will make a person to be successful in the world and even in the hereafter (Upu, 2013b). Good characters based on pluralistic nationalism values have three characteristics, namely (1) think globally, act locally, (2) commit nationally, and (3) respect to the pluralism, (Sukadi, 2012).

It is not a must to develop all elements of character in oneself. Although only several elements are developed in which each element supports the other elements, it is better than all elements are developed but there is one of them which is bad.

Meanwhile, the United State of America (Samani, 2012) developed two aspects only in character education, namely respect and responsibility. Then, from those aspects, several indicators are developed. One of the responsibility indicators is helping. Helping is a kind of social responsibility, for instance, helping other people who suffer disaster.

THE MOVEMENT OF EDUCATION QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

As been stipulated in Act No. 20 year 2003 that "education is an effort, so that people can develop their potential through learning and/or other means that is known and recognized by the community". Development is the responsibility of one's own potential for a better future in the midst of a very competitive competition. Therefore, do not wait for what will happen in the future, but welcome the future by running and carrying the potential and competencies required by the future.

4.1 The Institutional Movement of Education Quality

The article No. 3 of Act No. 20 year 2003 states that there are 4 functions that must be actualized in self-learners of Indonesia, namely: (1) the development function of learners' ability, (2) the formation function of a dignified national characters, (3) the development function of dignified national civilization, and (4) the function of educating the nation.

Related to the mandate and demands of Act No. 20 year 2003 in relation to improving the quality of education, the criteria that should be owned by a prospective teacher are as follows;

- (1) that in order to become a teacher, it is not enough just to have cognitive abilities, but the other important thing is the instinct or desire to become a teacher.
- (2) that in order to become a teacher, it takes talent and high interest as a prospective educator, not as a teacher or educator only.
- (3) to become a teacher, the ability of understanding intellectual development (developmental psychology) of learners should not be overlooked.
- (4) that in order to become a teacher, expertise in the field of pedagogy and andragogy is very important. Therefore, the period of 1 year for Teacher Professional Development (PPG) is not enough to build a professional teacher. Thus, the concept of concurrent and consecutive stay required in producing teacher candidates.
- (5) that for a teacher who can be *digugu* (trustworthy) and emulated, not just the teachers who transfer knowledge, a role model for the community and become the norm parameter, then it is necessary to prepare specifically for the methodical-didactic learning (Upu, 2010).

The preparing pattern of future teacher candidates to achieve high quality education is described below;

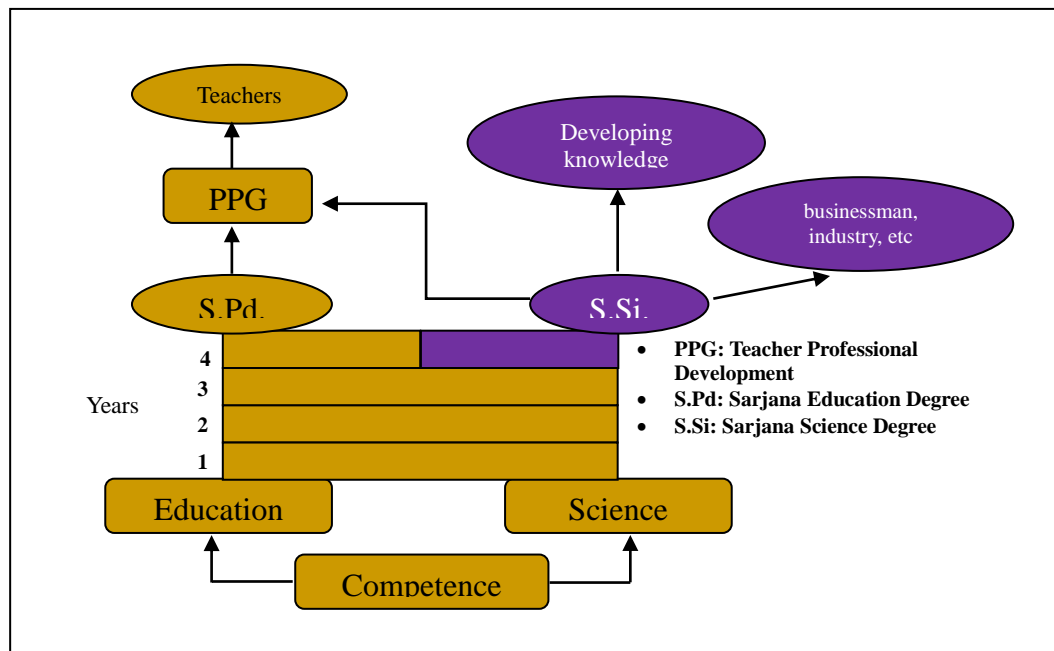


Figure 2: Recruitment pattern of future teacher

Good teachers are not yet a good guarantee to produce high quality of graduates or education. More than that, it needs a good school or an effective school, such as school effectiveness as the capability of the school to maximize school functions or the degree to which the school can perform school functions, when given a fixed amount of school inputs (Cheng in Jalal , 2008).

4.2 School Support and Instructional Process

A good school, which is expected to sustain a high quality of education, is a school that has facilities and adequate learning resources besides: (1) professional leadership, (2) shared vision and goals, (3) a learning environment, (4) concentration on learning and teaching, (5) high expectation, (6) positive reinforcement, (7) monitoring progress, (8) pupil rights and responsibility, (9) purposefull teaching, (10) a learning organization, and (11) home - school partnership (Jalal, 2008).

Unlike the criteria for effective schools, (Wohlstetter, 1994) proposed eight principles for high performance school models, such as: (1) an intellectual focus directed at helping students to use their minds well, (2) simple goals related to students mastering a limited number of skills and knowledge, (3) universal goals for all students in the school, (4) personalization through decreasing the number of teacher teaches students, (5) viewing the students as worker rather than a passive receptor of information, (6) students that indicate a grate exhibitions of knowledge and skill acquisition, (7) a staff who are generalists first and (8) specialists second.

Meanwhile, the direction of change in order to improve the quality of education in Indonesia in terms of the function of the school is as follows,

Table 1. The direction of change in the quality of education

Previous School Functions	School Functions Today
Cognitive domain leads to the form of rote.	Cognitive domain leads to the acquisition of knowledge, field study competence.
Skill domain leads to a mechanistic form.	Skill domain leads to life skills, creative thinking and motivation.
Value domain or character overlooked (ignored).	Value domain or character leads to shape attitudes toward self, others, environment, moral and work ethics, are concerned.
Interactive domain or relationship among students received less attention.	Interactive domain or relationship among students leads to a form of dialogue and open.

In line with school functions, the direction of change to improve the quality of education according to Strategy Policy contained in PP. No. 19 of year 2005 are (1) the learning process is organized in such a way that it feels alive, motivating, interactive, inspiring, challenging and provides enough space for initiative, creativity, and independence of learners according to their talents, interests and physical development of the learners, (2) the learning process provides exemplary, and (3) the learning process is effective and efficient for any educational institution by doing the planning, execution, learning assessment and good supervision. Wahab (2007) defined it in several steps, namely: (1) educational care movement, (2) all escort quality, (3) moral education is the responsibility of all, (4) the executive and legislative political will, (5) strengthening the lifelong education and (6) the need to maintain consistency in education innovation.

Overview of micro (Upu, 2013a) learning process, in relation to the direction of improving the quality of education is characterized by some capability aspects, namely education that is able to: (1) provide optimal services to students who have talents, interests, and different learning needs, (2) improve significantly the capabilities possessed by students who later became a proud self-actualization, (3) build a strong character and personality, solid and steady in self-learners, (4) empower resources (natural and human resources) optimally and effectively, (5) develop a broad networking toward stakeholders, (6) create schools as learning organizations or institutions, and (7) responsive to any form of change (Jalal, 2008).

The improvement of individual and organizational performance as a result of quality improvement is directed to use the Human Capital Strategy (HCS) criteria instead of Human Resource Model (HRM). Hall (2008) distinguished between the two as the table below:

Table 2. The comparison of HRM with HCS

Human Resource Model	Human Capital Strategy
Unclear aim	Clearly defined strategy
Unclear Accountabilities	Clear capabilities and accountabilities
Egalitarian	Focus on critical roles
Ad hoc and disconnected	Comprehensive and integrated
Undisciplined and unmanaged	Measured and managed like financial Capital
Focus on Internal Customer	Focus on external customers
Program-centric	Result-oriented
Reactive	Proactive and focused on year-over-year improvements

Sources: (Hall, 2008)

From the criteria of effective schools, high performance schools, school functions, policy strategies for effective schools, micro-consideration for teaching and learning process to improve education quality. Paul (2013) names as ideal schools. There are four criteria according to Paul for ideal schools, such as; (1) what parents want, (2) what students need, (3) what colleges want, and (4) the Ron Paul Curriculum.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Indonesian government's efforts to improve the quality of education and the quality of the national character are very well, especially in terms of regulatory support. Nevertheless, implementation and evaluation of the regulatory action is not yet maximal. As a result, until recently, the quality of education in Indonesia has not been taken into account at the global level, except for a few personal accomplishments of the national generation.

Practically, although it has been supported by institutional movement of education quality and instructional process, the direction of improving the quality of education in Indonesia still tends to be patterned on the preparation of Human Resources as a citizen of Indonesia. Meanwhile, the intention of global competitiveness, there are still many to be done before the education system can fully adapt to international standard.

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